



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913  
PH (517) 373.1707 | FAX (517) 373.3935  
[www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/toy/](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/toy/)

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Contact: Heather Lombardini  
(517) 373-1707

## Toy: Authority Board Needed to Ensure Fair Representation for Wayne County Service Area Consumers

LANSING – A two-bill legislative package to create a five-member authority board for the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) was reported out of the Senate Local, Urban and State Affairs Committee, Chairwoman Laura Toy, R-Livonia, announced today.

“Three-fourths of the four million customers of the Detroit Water and Sewage Department have no representation when it comes to decisions on contracts or rate increases,” Toy said. “This legislation has been introduced for almost two decades, and since then things have only gotten worse. Residents of Wayne County deserve these changes now.”

Senate Bill 195, sponsored by Toy, and House Bill 4206, sponsored by Representative Leon Drolet, R-Clinton Township, would increase protection of consumers by creating a new authority board for the DWSD, similar to the function of the Michigan Public Service Commission. The board would review and have approval power over all rate increases of the DWSD and would have veto power over any contracts.

The legislation would create a diverse and inclusive authority board, to ensure fair representation for all residents who use the DWSD. More than four of every ten Michigan residents gets their water from the DWSD, yet less than 1 of every 4 customers is a resident of the city of Detroit.

“The drinking water DWSD provides to customers does not only belong to Detroit; it comes from the Great Lakes and belongs to the entire state,” Toy said. “The

Michigan Legislature has a valid interest in protecting this resource for the health and safety of all the customers served by the DWSD. This is especially true with increased concern of terrorism in our communities.”

SB 195 and HB 4206 would maintain the high ethical standards supported by Governor Jennifer Granholm and protect workers under the Whistleblowers Protection Act. Workers who take an ethical stand and report deficiencies in the system would be protected from losing their jobs in their efforts to protect consumers and save Michigan’s natural resources.

SB 195 and HB 4206 will now be sent to the full Senate for consideration.

**Note: Audio comments from Senator Toy on Senate Bill 195 will be available after 10:00 a.m. tomorrow on the Michigan Senate Hotline at (517) 373-4000, or online at the Michigan Senate Republican Audiowire at [www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire/](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire/).**